

**LOUDOUN COUNTY ANIMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, October 28, 2009
County Government Center, Leesburg Room
1 Harrison St. Leesburg, VA 20176

Committee Members Present:

Paul Popejoy, Sugarland Run, Chairman
Donna Lewis, At-Large, Vice Chair
Joanne Dekker Donohue, Catoctin
Monica Patty, Dulles
Dr. Leslie Sinn DVM, Potomac
Lila Westwood, Broad Run

Committee Members Absent:

Kathy Brice, Blue Ridge, Recording Secretary
Paul Dodaro, Sterling
Dr. Michael Strickland DVM, Leesburg

LCACC Staff Present:

Thomas Koenig, Director
Kim Miller, Animal Control Officer
Inga Fricke, Shelter Manager
Laura Rizer, Public Relations

Public Present:

Ron Litz

The meeting was called to order by Chairman, Paul Popejoy, at 7: 00 pm. Ms. Joanne Dekker Donohue, Catoctin representative, was introduced. A new distribution list was handed out. The minutes for the September 2009 meeting were adopted as written. A request was made that, if possible, minutes be distributed to members Sunday prior to the meeting so that members can had time to review.

Public Comment:

None

DIRECTOR UPDATE: Mr. Koenig presented the following:

2011 Budget: Staff has been directed on how to prepare and present the department budgets. The tax rate must be advertised and more information is needed to be able to do this. Most supervisors want to keep an equalization rate (no increase in tax bills). They are also doing a +5 and -5 projections. The Department has prepared a first draft with first two tiers. The new County Administrator is going to be involved in the 2011 budget process. He reports on December 7th. Public comment will be December 8 (County Building) and December 10 (School Admin. Building). Check web site for dates and sign up date.

Kennel Floor Refinishing: They only completed the dog ISO-side of the outdoor runs. They ran into leaky walls problem and couldn't finish before the weather turned cold. The adoption runs will be on hold until late spring.

Spay Neuter License Plate Trust Fund: Over the past few months the Department has been looking into ways to expand spay/neuter efforts. Due to budget and some things that the Department will be facing in the next year or two, future dog license money should be directed to a non-profit that will take over the spay/neuter program for the County. A proposal for an agreement is being prepared and reviewed to contract out this service. The bid will be sent out to non-profits with criteria that must be met. They don't have to reside in Loudoun County but must demonstrate that they can properly serve the County. This involves future funds received through the license plate funds. Existing funds cannot be given to anyone. It will be used until the funds run out for free spay/neuter the Care program and spay/neuter as an incentive for adoptions. Inga Fricke explained what the Department's programs provides and what will be looked at when the bids come in as to what their programs will provide and what will be passed on to the citizen. The goal is to get the maximum benefits for the funds. One criteria will be to find a program that reduces the intake number at the Shelter, especially the number of cats. Dr. Sinn asked if the contractor will be requested to use the funds as part of an incentive program for the County's adoption. This will not happen as long as the County has any remaining funds. When County funds start to run out, this will be looked at in the next bid process and future agreements. Ms. Lewis asked about monitoring, accountability, and reporting requirements. Ms. Fricke explained the up-front bid criteria such as affiliations, checking references, demonstrated ability to operate a program, documentation of types of animals helped, and provide monitoring. The license plate fund has a built in provision for accountability of use of the funds. The contract will be set up similar to County contracts, renewable automatically with the consent of both sides with yearly for a period of 3 years and then have to go out to bid.

Meeting dates: Due to Public Safety Meeting dates being moved and their use of the Leesburg Room, the AAC committee will meet on November 18 and December 16 in the Mickie Gordon Room at the Parks and Rec. Building, 215 Depot Court, S.E., Leesburg. Public parking is on the left in the back. Committee members approved this change and the change will be advertised.

Special Exception: November 19 (6 p.m.) going to the Planning Commission to request permit the Shelter to be open on Sundays and permit a separate building in back of the shelter to be used for behavioral and staff training. This item will go before the BOS on December 7th. The Department has been working on getting the Special Exception first. It has taken 2 years to get before the Planning Commission. Due to a vote on operating hours in 1999, the BOS must vote on the operating hours of the Shelter. If Sunday opening is added, another day will have to be eliminated. Business (6 days) and adoption hours (5 days) will be looked at to see where most traffic will be and choose the best hours.

Special Exception Motion: Mr. Popejoy moved. Dr. Sinn seconded. Passed (6-0-3). "That the Animal Advisory Committee present to the Planning Commission and The Board of Supervisors a resolution of support for the proposed opening on Sundays as well as the training facility on the property." Motion passed with unanimous vote of all present. Mr. Popejoy will send out the wording by e-mail to all members. Mr. Popejoy will present it to the Planning Commission and the BOS.

DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL:

Animal Control: Ms. Miller presented the statistical reports. September dog bite chart (PA) is Pennsylvania. Listed are all bites. Clarification on "minor" was explained. Several were indicated as a "dangerous dog" and Ms. Miller explained how the chart shows which were held by the Department and how to determine which are deemed dangerous. "At Large" bites and multiple bites are usually held by the Department. If a dog is listed as "found dangerous" it is

still under adjudication. All bites results in a lot of man hours to investigate not just the bite but what happened that caused the bite.

Public Relations: Ms. Rizer presented the volunteer statistics. Two groups of special volunteers were discussed. CBI Program (Community Based Instruction) are groups of students that are being exposed to the workplace. The students come 3 or 4 days a week and clean small animals and do office work. These stats are kept separate. The students come from Loudoun County and Heritage High Schools and are a huge help. Many students continue to volunteer after they graduate. Another source of volunteers is from the MHR (Mental Health Department) where case workers go through the volunteer training and bring their clients to the shelter as feline friends and dog walkers.

Upcoming Events: Halloween Parade in Leesburg will use the Mobile Adoption Van decorated with stuffed animals. November 14 is Barkfest at Franklin Park. Homeward Bound was a great success with twenty adoptions in one day (13 cats, 6 dogs, 1 bird). It was a 12 hour "tail" gate party with a football field painted on the lawn.

"X" before a category means that these are old positions that have hours attached. Foster care is tracked separately.

November 4 is the next foster orientation. Volunteer orientation is by invitation and not listed on the web.

Animal Shelter: Ms. Fricke explained that just because a dog is in the shelter doesn't mean that it is there for adoption. There are various reasons for a dog to be in the shelter (held for court case, held for Return to Owner, etc.). During the Homeward Bound event, expert dog walkers were used to keep the kennels quiet.

NEW BUSINESS:

Subcommittee reports:

Euthanasia rates. Ms. Westwood and Ms. Patty have met but have not gotten out to the shelter to see some behavioral assessments. Ms. Patty has been talking to a person who runs a no kill shelter in Vermont to get some ideas. Ms. Westwood is going to start to volunteer at the shelter. They will attempt to get to the shelter separately to view assessment.

Public visibility: Dr. Sinn will make an attempt to get to the Planning Commission and BOS meeting.

Increasing volunteers: No report

Laws & ordinances: Three draft ordinances were sent out along with back-up documentation prior to the meeting.

#1 – Companion Animals and Livestock Constituting a Public Nuisance. Ms. Patty asked why the Section A, 1 & 2, was so similar to the Dangerous Dog legislation. This addresses all companion animals and livestock not just dogs. The wording is the same on purpose.

Motion: Mr. Popejoy moved. Ms. Patty seconded. Passed (6-0-3).

The AAC recommends that the Department of Animal Care and Control work with County Administration to have this ordinance (or a modified version) incorporated into the Loudoun County Ordinances. Motion passed with unanimous vote of all present.

This is a request for the Department to work with County Administration and when the ordinance is finalized bring it back to the AAC. The AAC will then review any changes and make a recommendation to the BOS. Mr. Koenig outlined the process. Ordinance proposed by Department, next to County Attorney's Office and to Budget, the Department with input prepares an item for Public Safety Committee, then to the BOS, BOS recommends that it go to public hearing. At public hearing the BOS can either suspend rules and vote or it is sent to the next general business meeting for a vote. At any point it could be sent back.

#2 - Tethering of dogs. Ms. Donohue felt the draft was overly restrictive and overly broad and vague. Example Part B-1, The dog is in visual range, also Part B2 and B3. Many people would be in violation of much of this due to the configuration of their yard and house. Time limits were discussed and explained along with the limitations of man-power, enforcement issues and ability to present in a court case. The whole purpose of this ordinance is to ensure dogs are properly tethered to protect animals from being injured. Ms. Miller stated that much of this language is already in State Code. Mr. Koenig stated that there is also movement in the General Assembly to pass separate bills on anti-chaining and anti-tethering bills. Dr. Sinn suggested maybe a rewrite so that tethering is not the primary means of confinement. After much discussion on definitions, wording and purpose to prevent long periods of tethering (thereby reduce the incidents of dog bites), and enforcement, it was suggested that members review wording and this item be placed on the November agenda as new business.

#3 - Transportation of companion animals. Covers tethering in a vehicle in a crate or two tethers attached to a harness not a collar.

Motion: Popejoy moved. Ms. Patty seconded. Vote suspended until November 18 meeting.

There was no objection to the vote being suspended.

AAC recommend to the Department of Animal Care and Control that the wording on the Transportation of Companion Animals be taken forward as a proposed change to the Loudoun County ordinances.

Mr. Popejoy pointed out that there is no penalty language on this proposal and should be the same as the tethering ordinance.

Dr. Sinn questioned the definition of "animal carrier" and if it includes multiple built-in crates. Ms. Miller stated that this would be something the County Attorney would advise on correct language and need for definitions.

Ms. Donohue asked if language covering motorcycles be included as a separate paragraph.

Animals in emergency: Mr. Popejoy reported that he is working on rescue procedures for cold/ice water.

Mr. Koenig reported that on November 10 Northern Virginia Region Animals in Disasters will hold an event to satisfy the last part of the grant for the Pet Friendly Shelter trailers. It will start at 8 a.m. and Prince William County Fair Grounds and volunteers are needed. Staff will participate and observe. Let Mr. Koenig know if you can participate. Minimum staff will remain at the shelter while others go to volunteer. Volunteers to help at the shelter are always welcome.

Reduced Cost and Improve Efficiency: no update.

In January, we will need to look at our committees and restructure, reposition resources and give status reports.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

For November meeting. Mr. Popejoy will present transportation language and Ms. Donohue will present language on tethering.

NEW BUSINESS

November meeting will include nominations for Chairman, Vice Chair, and Secretary with elections being held in December and taking office in January 2010.

Dr. Sinn has looked into information on the County Budget. Much expansion in the past has not been toward the shelter. When they are talking across the board cuts, the Department will be taking an unfair hit and will go back to 2001 levels. Dr. Sinn would like to have information on this aspect to present at Public Comment on December 8 & 10. Based on the proposed cuts on Tier I and II, the Department will be under 30 FTE for the first time since 2000. Dr. Sinn will work up stats for the November meeting.

COMMITTEE MEMBER INFORMATIONAL REPORTS:

- Mr. Popejoy attended the Tailgate event and his mother-in-law adopted a pet.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:45 p.m.

The next meeting of the advisory committee will be held on Wednesday, November 18 at 7:00 p.m. in the Mickie Gordon Room at the Parks and Rec. Building, 215 Depot Court, S.E., Leesburg unless otherwise notified.

The meeting was tape-recorded and this verbatim record is considered part of these minutes.